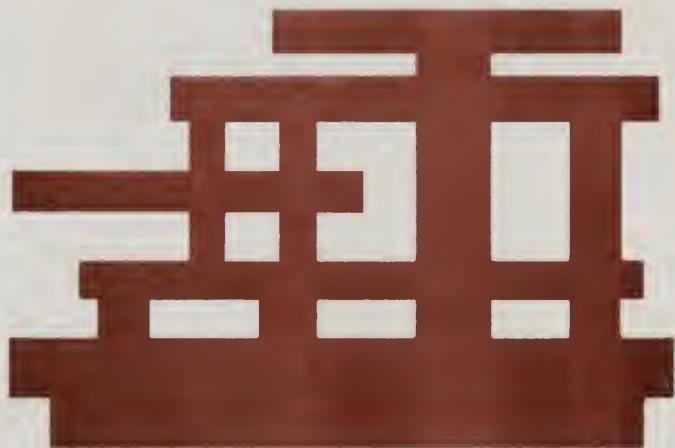


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a P g u s 85



(About the Cover . . .)

“Well Leslie had the original
idea in sketches and said,
‘I need someone to draw this,’
so I gave it a shot . . . ”

B.T.

ARGUS — THE MIND'S EYE

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(Bob drew it . . . but Leslie thought it up)

Northwestern's creativity — So what's left after one hundred years of "progress?" As a creative community, we see ourselves faced with cutbacks, taxes, and other limitations. And it cannot help but be wondered, will this creative progress be totally forgotten, and totally monitory, materialistic progress pave the way to the future? Who knows? They say a few things that might apply in such cases — "War is hell . . ." "to everything there is a season and a time . . ."

In the future, will Argus' hundred eyes weep at the sight of an uncreative society? Or will he be protected by those creative spirits who together have stood guard through this war, as Argus has stood guard in the past?

Perhaps the next one hundred years shall hold a new season and a new time for *Argus*. One can only hope . . .

Leslie Anne Gregory
editor-in-chief

Argus is a literary/arts magazine published by the students of Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

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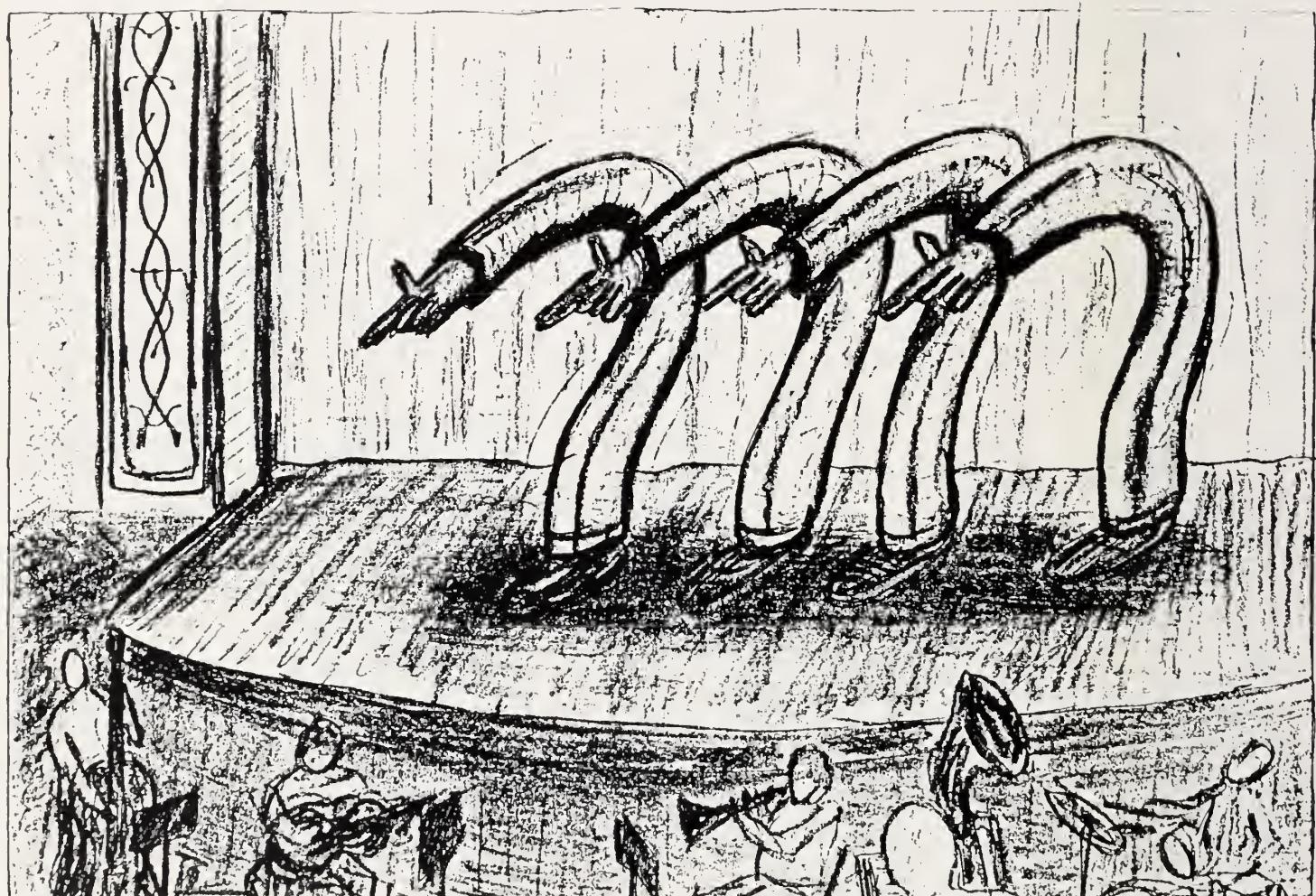


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Illustration by Bob Tooke



Set Free

Set free
a songbird
will hold on
trembling,

wary,
not trusting that
the prison is forever gone
unbelieving that some
iron hand
will again turn the key

Set free
a songbird
will blink at the sun
and its first few notes
tremble

Yet free in the warmth
of the sun,
the coolness of the breeze,
the songbird's wings will stretch
and its music lift to the sky

Kimberly Hebert

First Place Spring Contest — Poetry

Goodbye College Town

Watching carefully the cars that pass
Searching for the faces well remembered
From scenes that have all been past played
And now find places in personal history files
Such familiar mugs seem to elude so well now
Sometimes as distant as the places they now run
The streets they now cruise
The local burger barns they now frequent
Not to share anymore
Smiles across too well lit truck stop tabletops
Tacky clothing shopping sprees
Winded worn out tracks lined with a thousand paired feet
Or wise assed anti frat parties
Long away are the faces who knew the Sixties
Hearts that knew first timed lyrics to radical songs
Dancers who could limbo without practice
Rioteous profiles who had something worth fighting toward
Even it nothing to say
Vehicles now sport snappy exteriors
Only moms and pops not on welfare could manage
For such tiny spoon fed tots
Present parties not excluded
Peaches and creamed complexions now blush the streets
Faces grown young and pseudo-tough for fashion's sake
Images ruled by vogue
Not time or causes
Or even desires to breath freshness
It must be time to pack the garden
And depart

Elisabeth L. Murray

I thought I was right
that I had a claim to these things, I mean.
That isn't the way you do things, though,
is it?

Of course, it isn't supposed to matter
that your mind wishes so hard to have them,
or is it?

Well, I think a lot then.
I wish a lot — and plan those plans
that always disintegrate like fragrant bubble flights
that are always overbooked.

Afterall, it's just the reoccurrence of an uneven dream.

Lisa Davis

Explaining Home

If I could give to you these hills
on a silver platter
John the Baptist style as you have grown
accustomed
I would gladly do it
If I could make you understand that part of these
damn piney woods
Is me
That part of me is their beauty
Perhaps you would begin to understand
These skies you think duller than those you call
your own
Trees you find all the same to eyeball
Red dirt that you find too horrible to seed with
yourself
Grassy knobbed land you cannot bear to drive
Are mine
Only to you do these hills sleep
If I could open you to them
To needles against rose-ocre horizonless sunsets
Water-flows as red as the banks they wash
Rising and falling scapes whose turns breath-
lessly roll
If I could show you how to become one with
Land so wanting of you
I would gladly do it.

Leslie Anne Gregory

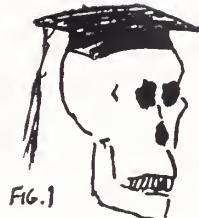


"Old Harvest"
Black and white photograph by Renee Richard

Good Ole N.S.U.

A hundred years have come and gone
Since the inception of Louisiana State Norm.
Where students of every race, color, creed
Have graduated and filled many a need.
There's Science Tech, Liberal Arts, Education,
Nursing, Basic Studies, and Business Administration.
These, as well as Graduate Studies, have no peers
So intrepidly we move into our second hundred years.

R. Elaine Hale



TEST : MULTIPLE CHOICE

- A. JIMMY HOFFA
- B. FIRST N.S.U. GRADUATE
- C. ALL OF THE ABOVE
- D. NONE OF THE ABOVE

Illustration by James Webb

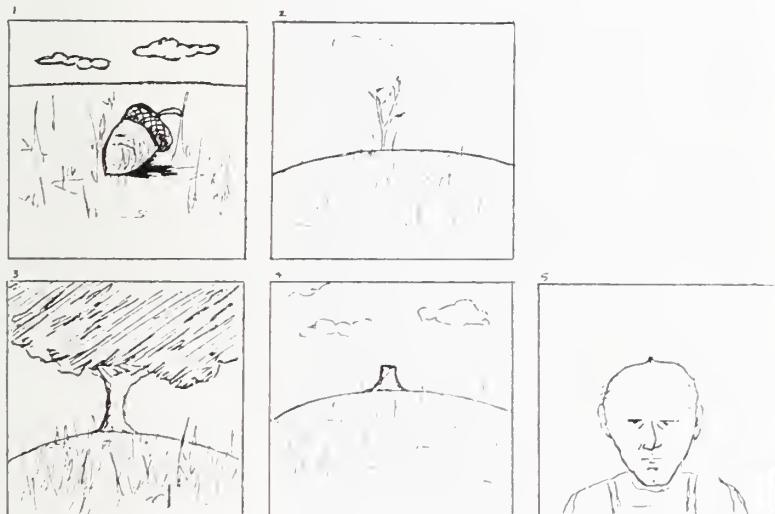


Illustration by James Webb

History Hill

In a deep south state beside
the tumbleweed star,
overlooking sweet Cane
River, stands Natchitoches history hill —
wrapped in oaks, old and new from
seed to thick black stump.

Waving with questions the recently rooted
inquire of old hulking boughs,
what of the nanny, the soldier, and baby,
pre-dating my begotten fall?

Whispers, wind shaped, fly
leaf to leaf, cupping
old stories of final relief, passed
down and preserved, secrets they keep.

A gulf breeze warms tales from
the old south slope, where they lay
long and cold. Short stories
most, of hardship and strife,
death and dyings' answer of life.

The circular pattern of life on the hill,
preserves and remembers those cold and still,
acorn to stump,
gnarled oaks mark the fall.

Paul E. Niemoeller

To A Friend

Like Heaven's blue, eternal skies above,
Thy eyes, as Lethe, calm and ease the strife.
Thy eyes are lakes in which I see thy love,
True mirrors of a special gracious life.
In truth, thou art to me the brilliant sun,
The shining one whose life is melody,
The peaceful friend whose love is never done.
True star! If I could be a light to thee!
So I, the plant, enveloped in thy glow
And nurtured by thy care, send forth a bloom
Of joy to all including those called foe.
In thee I never find a hint of doom.
The sun itself shall die in fiery blast,
But thou, my friend of certain faith, shall last.

Elizabeth C. Barberouse



Illustration by Matthew Lucius, age 9

Life,
intermingling of people,
thoughts,
individuals,
and dreams;
through love,
and friends.

Robert Guy

A Multiplicity of Schemes

Poetry for breakfast,
poetry for tea.
I eat my words
with every meal,
their taste surrounding me.

Couplets and triplets,
sonnets have I made,
while dining
on my tea and toast
or gin and marmalade.



The cedars rust in fall.
The rains of summer
etch brown stains
on bitter green
and leave
a scent of death
for me to taste,
as cedars rust in fall.



I feel relaxed and warm,
like a baby
who just wet himself,
except that I expect
the shock of cold reality
that will come next;
and the baby does not.



Connections slip their way
past the rock of reality
into the pool of being
that lies
beneath that rock.



We live in an arbitrary world.
Who says?
They do.
That's Who!



It's Mother's Day
and I guess what I've found
is that
I've sort of lost interest
in being a mother,
'cause here I sit
bored and antsy
with no place to go
and nother to do
but make like a mother
and so suddenly I know
you can outgrow
Motherhood.



Make yourself vulnerable
with a smile, a glance, a touch
an opening of yourself to him,
and then
the rape begins
and you have no recourse.



There are no bells to signal
the changing of the mass
only footsteps linked by voices
talking nonsense
as they pass one by the other
in the halls
on the way to their next class.



Patricia Ann Quayhagen

My Summer on Percy Street

Crepe Myrtles fuchsia break
Long awaited
Upon my porch
Crouched amid
Marigolds,
Big pink pot
Geranium-filled,
Ever damn Nandinas
I perch
To watch
Cars,
Cats, children,
Cycle-bottomed neighbor women
Up the street
Down the block
I nonchalantly toss
Looks to boys
My summer lusts for
Cat, once kitten
Munches
Grasshoppers,
Cricket wings,
Rugby-striped orange-black
And refuses my offer
Of carrot-stick morsel

Leslie Anne Gregory

Life Sounds

oil lamp streaks shadows
across my face
I think of nothing
and smoke
crickets create music
outside my room
melody is familiar
I sing along.
cigarette smoke streams
through cold night air
I quit singing
and listen —
dogs bay in the distance,
challenging the moon —
the music now
has other words,
another tune.

Ellen Dollar



Drawing by Leslie Anne Gregory



"Fruit Sky: Mouse Killer"

Black and white photograph by Warren Tape and Joel Pearce

The cat doesn't believe in me anymore.
She is no longer patient and endeared
to my unexceptional heart.

She no longer attacks my knees
when I come home,
or rides my shoulders
when I drive.

No more does she assault my back early morning
as I dress,

or gently bat my eyes
when nightime sofa-dozing.

With disdain she awaits me now
if she does at all.

She only turns her head with slow amusement,
and blinks

patiently at my ignorance of condition.
The cat doesn't believe in me anymore.

Lisa Davis



Illustration by James Webb

Mr. D.

Ole man dies,
he fades and
drifts in the
wind,
then slowly, falls
to the ground
yellow and red
to be stepped on,
maybe, or
transplanted by
the wind, or
perhaps picked up
by tiny hands
to gently take
to show and tell.

Ellen Dollar



Illustration by James Webb



"Chuck's House"

Black and white photograph by Warren Tape and Joel Pearce



Illustration by James Webb

bite the
barrell —
don't taste
too good now
son do it? —
icy cold thumb
shaking icy
cold trigger —
watch out
son wait til
you're ready.

god is on your side.

the wall will
catch your
brains — make
a terrible
mess —
who the hell
will clean
it up huh?

end of your rope
son? — tie a knot
and hang on.

Toni Lee Wing

Child of Our Own

Freedom
Is yours now
Ours is yet to come.
You never were
Content to taste
The average meal of man.
You were dealt the hand
Of flight
From all that was bound
To earth.
You were like
A wanderer,
A boy without a fight,
A bird, a child,
A colt gone wild
And galloping for the
Shore.
You reached that shore
Then passed it by.
You flew the autumn
Sky.
You ran the race
And so took a taste
Of whatever lies
Beyond.
We lesser ones,
We earthbound ones,
We longed to run with you.
But you couldn't wait,
You'd sealed your fate
When ours had just
Begun.
And so now our task
Is not to ask
Why you have flown
So quickly . . .
We must rejoice
In your life's course —
You loved us all
So deeply
Child of our own,
Child gone wild,
You have the rest of us
Beat.
For you knew all along
And the truth made you strong:
It's the love that conquers
Defeat.

Kathryn Crandell

His eyes
were blue.
His countenance
dark
Oh so very dark.
And she loved him.

He put his hands on her
gently.
And when he took them away
she cried.
He took the inside of her mind
and lived there.
And when he left there
he crushed it.

But he said he was sorry.
And she loved him.

He took himself away
completely.
She learned things and occupied
her own mind.
And she accomplished
her own soul.

He came back
for her mind.
And was jealous of her soul.
So he said he was sorry.
And she killed him.

Lisa Davis

All Souls

Old graves,
freshly-brushed
headstones,
scrubbed with bleach,
shift in their molds,
when loving hands
reach back
and take fresh flowers
the summer's last,
and press them down
in Mason jars
until they're filled

with some vestige
of life
among the dead.

Patricia Ann Quayhagen

To Tell The Truth

Honesty is a double-edged sword.
It's the game you play whenever
you don't want to tell the truth.
It's the gift you give,
that will never be accepted.
It's the letter you don't mail,
the thought that lives alone.

Honesty is a part of you:
entirely subjective.
It is tinged with your darkest emotions,
and lightest smiles;
It wears your clothes and your perfume,
And combs its hair the way you do.

Honesty —
is a lie.

Toni Lee Wing

When Clouds Are Angry

When clouds are angry, churning, silver gray,
They roll and bellow, spewing forth disdain.
Desire of thirsty earth pleads for them stay
To quench her dry and barren land with rain.
As heaven's angry tears begin descent,
They saturate the eager, waiting soil.
The clouds their strongest feelings try to vent
And cause the soil's erosion, and recoil.
The friendship shared by us is like to this
Because our love is angry, gray, and dark.
At times our thirst for one another's kiss
Leaves deep impressions and a scarring mark.
Although this love we share gives us delight,
Consuming, it destracts, our love to spite.

Suzanne Ebarb

The Day Billy Joe McCallister Jumped Off The Tallahatchie Bridge Or I've Got A Bad Case Of The Melancholy Blues

It rained
today,
grey and wet
caressing
melancholy blues —
thoughts came
and went
through shared
scotch sips
and fell,
with fantasies
onto blue and
red plaid dreams.
and there
they lay
for awhile
united and
content
until the weight
of reality
crushed and broke
them,
leaving them there
to be silently
swept into
the esoteric
dustpan of memories.
it rained
today . . .

Ellen Dollar

The Ballard Of Richard's Cafeteria American Or The Lost Dreams Of Dreamers

Once upon a time in America,
A boy dreamed
The incredible dreams of a dreamer,
And now . . .

The imagination ran rampant,
money
power
I could be President,
And now . . .

The coffee drips,
The alarm trips.
The dream slips,
and now . . .

Play that scene again,
I want to be somebody.
I was different,
And now . . .

Play that scene again,
I am nobody,
I'm no different,
And now . . .

I was told so much,
I dreamt too much,
Shattered and torn,
And now . . .

I DREAM

The coffee drips,
The alarm trips.
The dream slips,
And now . . .

Christopher Louisell



Illustration by Bob Tooke

Knitting Needles

"I am so afraid, sometimes,
That the world will crush me."

"Can't, dear, just can't be — do you like
Red or green better?"

Click, clack, knitting needles.

"But I feel smothered, I feel I shall just
die if I can't have some space —"

"Oh, hon, just busy yourself, just —"

"I do! I do! I am so far away from everyone,
but still they crush me. Does anyone touch
with their minds;
is there a catalyst for —"

"Pray to Jesus, dear, pray to Jesus, he's your friend
in times like these, your only friend."

Clack, clack go the knitting needles.

"Do you think this will be much too small?"

"The world is too small, my mind is too large; I don't
know where to put it."

"My, you say such things — and you shouldn't.
Just you sit down and help me with this . . ."

Click, clack, clack, clack.

Lisa Davis

A Sleeper's Thought

Swallow within the frame,
enter for indulgence
of the mind.
Lapping secretion from
split urns due
to a mongrel swine's
sloppiness of memory.

Keith Woods



The palette of the gods
pours out the fading sun,
as amethysts seek out the top,
and primrose drops deep down
beneath the weight
of darker hues,
while shades of lilac
fight and lose,
becoming seas of azure night,
then Midas' fingers
touch them all.

He would grab up and turn them back
to gold —
the gods refuse,
it is the death of light.

Patricia Ann Quayhagen

wandering minstrel of sorts,

and times;

a music player,

of hymes and rhymes.

to each,

to all,

together,

and in tune,

we simply pass,

this summer afternoon.

in such a celebration,

with such a chorus sung;

we sing in consolidation,

and recite in prose,

and admiration, chuang-tze.

for love,

for life,

for beauty,

for everything in earnest;

we praise,

we pry,

we ponder.

we gather at the sounds of thunder.

to behold such things not seen before,

and entice one's heart and soul,

to gather sights and sounds,

to whom we dare enchant;

children,

birth,

conception,

the wonders of the world.

life,

and love,

and liberty;

I GASP AT LIFE,

AND GRASP AT MY BEING.

so long the sojourn tires,

so short it's quaint drift path.

the sea,

see,

the shore,

and form filled sand,

the wind,

the elements,

time,

the sky colored in sun in morning.

together we pass this hour,

and these moments in our day,

ah! lovely lady,

my butterfly and bloom.

Robert Guy

Mornings at 5:30

Early Saturday mornings
darkness fades to
Day's Tennessee Williams' heat
Insects seek shelter,
Desiring bedfellows of the air-conditioned nature
Fresh-brewed coffee scent
filters thick through the houses
Aroma waves
Ribbon crepe myrtles
Wrap oriental parchment brown
Walt Whitman, Walt Mitty, and Cat
listen
to the smell of slightly watered New Orleans' brew
and albums no one else will have —
W W & C
stare
at the moon-rabbit now hopelessly setting
and finish their dreams
Birth
Bombers
half-opened Siamese blues
They grab at deserting night

Leslie Anne Gregory

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU HEARD ... ANYBODY WHO THINKS I'M GONNA WAKE UP BEFORE DAWN JUST TO EAT A MEASLEY WORM IS OUT OF THEIR FRICKIN' MIND!

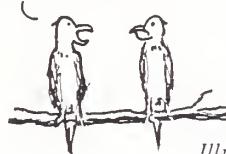


Illustration by James Webb

An October Noon

1. Shards of tinsel,
thrown on brown-paned
glass,
reflected sun drops
cut from pond
and light,
diamonds shaped by wind and
autumn sun,
catch fire within their settings,
then they *drown*.
2. October noon
turns platinum
with the wind-bleached sun,
stripping gold from autumn air,
leaving ghosts of Christmas lights
and silver tinsel
there upon *the pond*.
3. October sunbeams
danced upon the pond,
pirouetted, tour j'eted,
then flung themselves
into its depths
and drowned.

Patricia Ann Quayhagen

Almost Too Late

It was a cold, gray day with a steady drizzle. I stood in the doorway of the old apartment building and checked the address against the one the local postmaster had given me. I stepped inside the dark corridor; it seemed colder inside than it had outside. My eyes slowly became accustomed to the light, or rather the lack of it. The paint was flaking from the walls and the carpet was covered with stains and holes. I shifted my suitcase to my left hand and used my right to steady myself as I started up the stairs. When I reached the second floor I located apartment 2B and knocked. There was no answer, so I knocked again. Again there was no answer, so I reached down and turned the door knob. I opened the door slowly and stepped inside.

The apartment was like another world, clean and well kept, save for the over-stuffed chair and table that sat near the window, directly across the room from the door. An old

By Ken Murphy



Illustration by Bob Tooke

man sat in the chair, his head was down, chin against his chest. An empty glass and a bottle of gin sat on the table next to him. Smoke drifted from an unfinished cigarette laying in an ashtray on the arm of the chair.

The old man slowly lifted his head a bit with a wobbly motion and stared at me through his thick eyebrows. "Who are ya' 'n what da hell ya want?" he said with a pronounced slur.

I dropped my suitcase to the floor and started pulling the glove from my right hand with my left. "I'm your son," I said.

The old man lifted his head the rest of the way and looked at me through glazed eyes. "Well ya might as well step on in and have a seat," he said with a bit more clarity.

I had removed both gloves and stuffed them into the pockets of my overcoat. I pulled the coat off and draped it across my suitcase.

"Billy, is that really you?"

"Yes," I said, "it's really me." I walked across the room and sat on the end of the couch nearest the chair.

He reached with a trembling hand for the bottle on the table. His skin was leather-like and spotted from old age. His face, puffy and red, was topped by hair thick and silvery-white. "Wanna drink?" he asked.

"I don't drink," I told him.

He poured the gin into the glass and placed the bottle back on the table. I imagined he had placed many bottles there before. Then he put the glass to his lips and drank its contents in one motion. I wondered why he had poured the gin into a glass at all, unless it was his "drunk's" measuring cup.

When he finished his ritual, he looked at me with a strange kind of puzzled look. His fingers dug into his pocket and produced a filterless cigarette which, with some difficulty, he placed between his lips. I leaned over and lit the cigarette for him after which I asked him straight out, "Why?"

"Why, wadda ya mean, why?"

"Why haven't you tried to contact me in these twenty years?" I inquired.

He laughed, at first I thought it was a cynical laugh, now I realize it was merely out of puzzlement. "Why haven't ya tried to see me?" he replied.

I clinched my teeth. "You dumped me! You ran out on me twenty years ago and never sent me a letter or anything. You didn't care if I was alive or dead!"

"Boy, I've been *dead* for twenty years. Never bothered nobody; you bust in on me today and try and tell me what I cared about."

I felt a tightening in my stomach. I had started out all wrong. "Look, all I want to know is why; if you could just tell me that. If you could just explain to me why I'm having to sit here and ask these questions at all."

He poured himself another shot of gin, swallowed it and looked me straight in the eye. "Your Ma was nothing but an angel. Yep, that's what she was." His voice sounded almost sober, as if the thought of her alone was his silent strength. "You look a whole lot like your Ma, boy. Those blue eyes and

you have her nose and her mouth, too. I can still picture her the day we were married. She had her hair up and a yellow flower stuck in it right above her left ear." The old man sat silent for a moment. "She was nineteen and I was thirty-three. Robbin' the cradle, was what everybody said, but I loved her and they all knew it."

I started to say something, but I decided against it. My mother had died when I was three, so I could not really remember her. No one had ever described her like that old man slouched in that easy chair.

He took a drag from the cigarette and then watched the smoke twist and swirl as it rose toward the ceiling. "She was the finest woman and the finest wife a man could've asked for. She almost died birthin' you, but she just wouldn't give up. I told her that, too, that she was no quitter. We had been married for ten years before you were born. We were both mighty proud. So anyway, I took a job here at the mill 'cause it paid better money. We moved to this place about six months after that."

"Do you mean that I lived here in this place?" I asked him.

"Yep, this very apartment. I thought it was better to lie to your aunt and uncle about where I was living, you know, after it happened."

"After what happened?"

"I was working over at the mill and there was an accident. I was broken-up pretty bad and your Ma worried over me day and night."

I saw the old man's knuckles whiten as he clenched the armrests. He took a deep breath before he continued.

"It was too much for her, she caught the fever . . . It should have been me that died, not her."

He buried his face in his hands and took another deep breath.

"Well, I couldn't work and was put on a small pension and I couldn't take care of a three-year-old, so I had a friend take you to your Ma's sister."

I did not know what to say, I knew my mother had died but I had never heard about the accident. "Why didn't you tell anyone? How come you never told Aunt Meg?"

"Times were hard and nobody wanted to take care of a cripple. My body was broken and so was my heart. I wrote your aunt that I was moving to a new house and just never answered any of the letters that she sent here. I crawled into a bottle ever since. I cared about you, son. I just wasn't worthy of you. I love you and I wish things could have been different." He said as he poured another shot of gin.

I felt like exploding with joy. "Things can be different," I said, "I love you, too."

His chest tightened and his chin quivered a little.

Those steel-gray eyes had tears in the corners as he looked at me. A smile formed on his lips. I knew he had found something inside, like a priceless treasure found in the ruins of an old house. he put his cigarette out in that full glass of gin and we talked on for hours.

The next morning I found him in fresh clothes sitting in the old over-stuffed chair. The day was clear and sunlight poured in through the window. There was a smile frozen on his lips. I knew that now he had found his son, he had gone to find his angel.



Illustration by Bob Tooke

The Deep Dive

First a vulcanized rubber suit to keep me dry,
(lace the legs tight).

Then a Breastplate to make the seal,
(twist the lugs tight).

Sixty pound shoes to keep me upright,
(first left then right).

A one hundred pound belt to hold me down,
(don't jock it too tight).

And a forty pound Hat for breathing, and talking, and seeing,
(quarter turn right).

Now up and I stumbling walk and splash, I float to the big down line.
Then grasp and scissors, and push the exhaust, and
Down I quickly slide.

The light leaves by degree, as comes the thermal cold,
one cold follows another bringing fresh chill, and
the light goes, and I slide.

There is no surface. No ship bottom for consolidation, just
darkening purple vastness, and
my harpsicord bubbles going home without me, and
the firm ocean squeeze, tightening, and
my animated rope connecting up and down, while I slide.

Now my air turns sweet, fragrant and new, and
I taste it, and want it, and I slide.

Thermals come strong to stiffen fingers, to
rattle teeth, or
make me convulse from my animated friend and
send me to the mud.

The light cannot reach me now, useless eyes close,
and I slide.

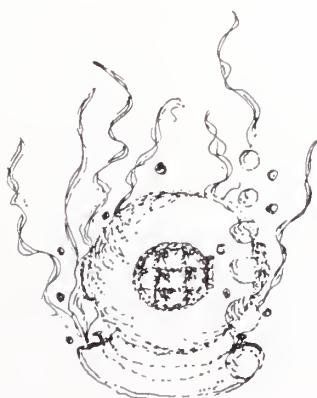
The air is too sweet, too sweet. I eat it with contempt,
My eyes ate too much — Now their sweet horror — and I slide.

The bottom rushes up to break sleepy legs, Oh yes, my task,
my job. The shackle, the pin, in here, and twist, done —

Now friend where are you, tired hands couldn't hold you,
I must circle for you, I must circle, But, I am tired,
I must — circle — I must — — — I — — —

OH SWEET EYES, MY SWEET EYES.

Paul E. Niemoeller



*Illustration by
Leslie Anne Gregory*



Illustration by Matthew Lucius

The Trap

The birds, the clan of
the lite heart, he snares
with his woven cord —
that freedom-lover, dark devil, has called,
has whispered.

And breasts with wary eyes, yes even
the yet untamed, like me
will go
for clever and cunning is he.

Lisa Davis

legends and heros,
doers and don'ts,
trials and their awesome tribulations,
myths upon mysteries.
wanting for comprehension,
understanding,
a feeling of peace of mind,
of love.
the actors act,
the players play,
their roles of endless make-believe;
and the watchers,
the lookers,
the wanting audiences;
smile,
dream,
and cry for their role on stage.
never ending,
never beginning,
always they sit and applaud;
eternally,
sincerely,
and hopelessly.
continuing upon trodden paths of glory,
seeking the ancient art,
of recognition for great deeds;
common those doings of men seem.
peaceful chants of wise and patience,
the silent existence of most people,
the mesa of society standing still,
sober against the politics of war.

Robert Guy

Dreams

Behind closed eyes rolls familiar fog,
Discolors perception, demented intent, grasping clutch,
it seeks advantage!

On and on the scenes replay,
Gore displayed, (familiar to the touch)
Friends and family, turned or buried,
Disfigured mommies all in a lump.

Lifting, decending, it won't be rid,
Till morning's light burns it —
But for now,

The
Fog
and
Me.

Paul E. Niemoeller

To Quit:

John Wayne couldn't do it, such
a milk toast act.
To succumb to the now,
to relieve the pressure. This
natural and spurned response. A
deliberate weakness, a planned implosion.
The point of lost vision,
faded foresight, A
subjective consolation.
That snap, that click, the
microsecond that steals a diploma,
separates the victors, layers competitors.
Motivation counterweight, A
point in degradation, A
frightful introspection.
A capacity to lie down,
Release the grip,
slide away.

Paul E. Niemoeller

Elephant Sonnet

In the hot noon Day, in the jungle sun,
Continent shaped like a horse's head
The safari hunter carries his gun
The hours passed, the orb'd disk turned red.

He set up his camp and heard creature sounds
Mosquito drapings over his cot lay.
Not far from camp a waterhole was found.
It was the spot where, thirsty, went his prey.

Lulled to deep sleep by a wilderness song,
He dreamed of the chase of the mammoth beast.
When dawn arrived, the night had been too long —
His throat was dry, the waterhole was east

The ivory tusks were there to drink their fill
This scene then quenched the hunter's thirst to kill.

Gabrielle Harbich



Illustration by Bob Tooke

*...SO WE FINALLY MOVED OUT BECAUSE
OF THE ROACH PROBLEM...*



Illustration by James Webb

Fear

Irritable flutters signal concern, slitting
a confidence crack.
Fear's stiff fingers slide inside, rendering
homeostatic decay.

calories doled in damp shudders,
commutes voluntarily brother to brother,
Robotic decisions loveless and rash,
Penetration is complete, Provocateur pass.

Guts tight and useless, stagnant muscles fatigue,
predisposed palpitation, red cells pack too tight,
head thick and thumping, ears ring bright white,
in the grasp, in the grasp, I STAND IN DARK LIGHT.

Paul E. Niemoeller

Loss

hopes
silent
dead like
summer days
dreams
shattered
gone like
yesterdays

Ellen Dollar

Pride

There are no endings in life,
even in the end of life itself.
We are immortal.
We live on as a memory,
or as a commandment.

We gaze knowingly into the eyes of death,
at every sunrise,
And blink.

Toni Lee Wing



"The Heroes"

Black and White photograph by Warren Tape and Joel Pearce

"Although I see the camera as an instrument, I also see it a powerful tool to be used to engrave statements on the face of the earth. I sincerely hope that you will not appreciate this photograph for art's sake, but rather for the interpretation which I have given it — summed up in the name itself."

Commentary by Tape & Pearce

My Father's Gift

The potatoes I peeled this morning
to go with the Sunday roast
were covered still with the dust
from my father's fields.
He plated their eyes last winter
in the first season of the year
as the snarling winds of January
turned mud to clay;
and he built from that clay
what was to come.
And then he waited,
and then he hoed,
and then he prayed for salvation
of his green-feathered plants,
baptism by spring rains
to save their green and
melt the clay to mud once more.
At last, after months too often dry,
in early June, he pulled those same
plants up
and threw them on a fire he'd made
and then he buried his work-carved hands
into the hard grey dust of summer
and brought forth rubies,
a hundred carats big,
rich, lop-sided globes, full of meat
and love.
He filled up bushel baskets,
one after the other,
until he had enough to feed his children
and theirs,
and then he shared them out,
so many for this one,
a little more for that,
and maybe a little less for the third,
playing favorites not by favor,
but by need,
taking care of his children and his
children's
children
even unto the third generation;
saying "I love you" with potatoes
and dirt,
and work-carved hands.

Patricia Ann Quayhagen



"Rose-Colored Stained Glass Windows"
Black and white photograph by Warren Tape and Joel Pearce

"Photography is not something to be exalted in itself, but is a method much like any of the other fine arts, of communicating a message — another language which has no correct translation except what I have applied to it or, to put it another way, what the picture is in reality is understood to mean. This is the mystery behind "Rose-Colored Stained Glass Windows."

Commentary by Tape & Pearce



"Susan On A Roll"

Black and white photograph by Warren Tape and Joel Pearce

First Place Fall Contest — Personal Essay

Won Over

Never in my wildest dreams had it ever occurred to me that I would eventually end up studying in Louisiana. In fact, when I left home for further studies back in 1979, the U.S. was not even on my mind; rather, it was to Manchester, U.K., that I was excitedly headed for.

But then, in 1980 a hither to

internationally unknown nonentity

By Robert C. Keasberry

came to power in Britain — the very same controversial character who was later dubbed "The Iron Lady." The drastic changes she immediately set to bring about included not only cutting down the national budget for education, but also increasing the tuition for all foreign students

who were about to start their graduate studies in 1980.

In the past, increase in tuition for foreign students in the U.S. were not unusual and were, in fact, even expected every year. But so ridiculously exorbitant was the new fee for 1980 (about three and a half times that of 1979), that hordes of self-funded foreign students suddenly found themselves faced with the painful decision of either to give up and go home or to go elsewhere and continue. Most chose the latter because, for the first time, it was then actually less expensive to study at universities in the U.S., Canada, Australia, or New Zealand.

And so, in 1980, I found myself writing to the American Embassy in London for a list of recommended universities offering computer science. I finally chose the University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, because it was the least expensive and I had read that Lafayette has mild winters.

However, it had not been easy for me to make up my mind definitely to leave Manchester for Lafayette. Traditionally, students from my country had, up till 1979, always looked to the U.S. for furthering their studies: England was THE place to go, period. (Which is not surprising when you consider that our system of education is British.) Indeed, three of my own brothers and a sister had completed their higher education in Manchester and were, together with my parents,

encouraging me to stay on despite the extortionate tuition fee. Besides, to leave meant that I would have to leave behind the warmth and security of a close circle of friends and a brother and his family, and be completely alone in a strange "cajun" city called "Lafayette" somewhere in Louisiana.

But to the charming world of bayous, crawfish, boudin, red beans and rice, and jambalaya I did come in Fall, 1980. And after three happy years I was able to graduate and return home to my country, Brunei, which just gained her independence from Britain at the beginning of 1984.

Back home, I was not surprised to find myself being labelled as "pro American" simply because I had so many good things to say about the U.S., particularly the system of education, which tends to be pooh poohed by most of those who only had the chance to get their higher education in Britain. (I was just as ignorantly biased while I was in Manchester.)

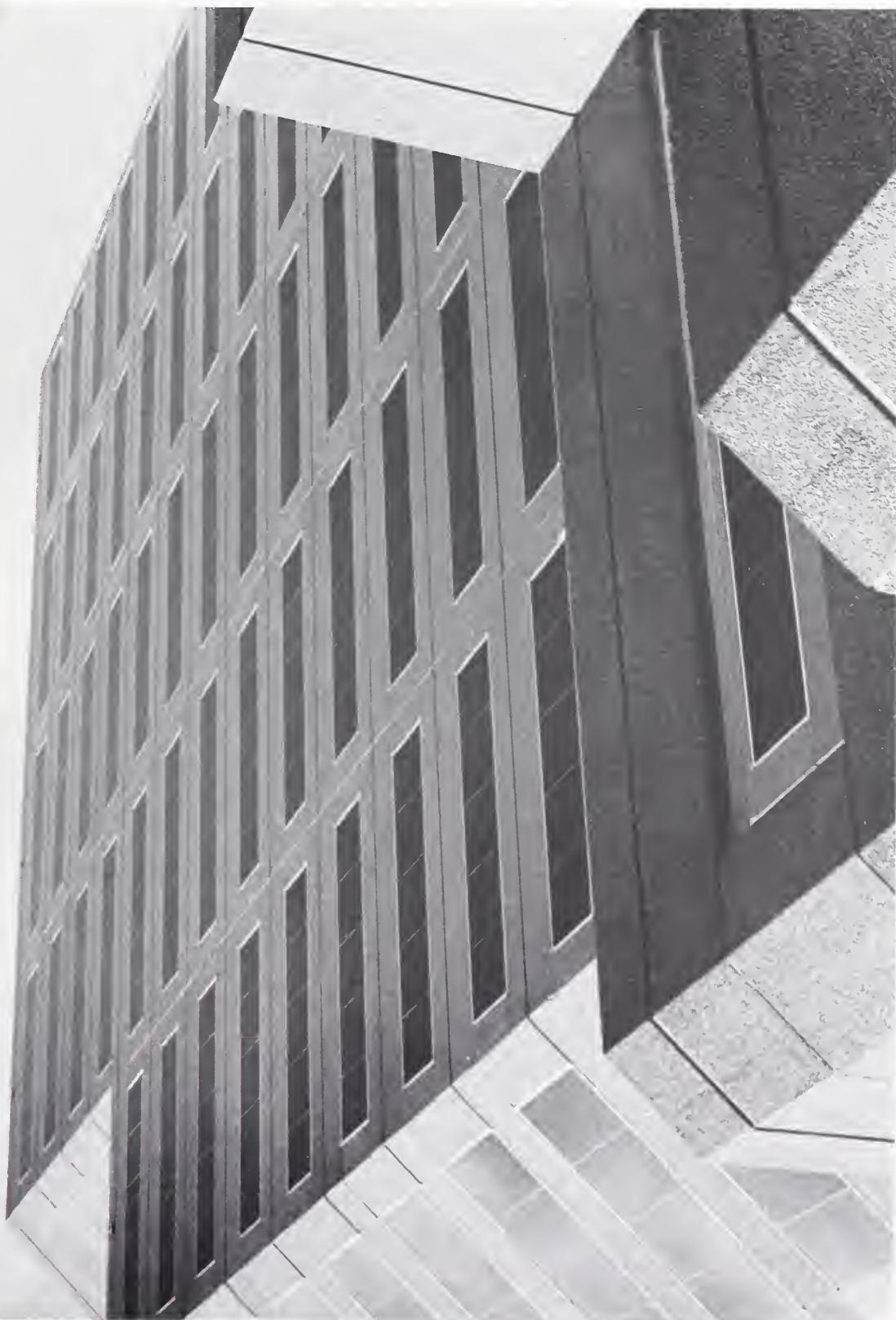
Already, there are more and more students from my country graduating from non-British universities. Many have graduated from U.S. universities, and more are following in their footsteps. It is these people, who, when sooner or later given the top positions at work, will make far-reaching decisions favoring American know-how and machinery, rather than blindly favoring, as in the past, anything British.

Thanks, ironically, to the Iron Lady.



Illustration by Chad Deloche, age 9

First Place Fall Contest — Photography



"The Spider Man"
Black and white photograph by Warren Tape and Joel Pearce



Illustration by Bob Tooke

Third Place Spring Contest — Poetry

Which Way'd They Go?

Caesar's Palace

I pulled that bandit's arm
I watched the fruit roll around.
A lemon . . . an orange . . . a lime.
Damn! I put in another coin.

There was a plunk as the food
Hit its belly. Down went the arm.
A lemon . . . ANOTHER lemon . . . an orange.
Crap! I dug into my pocket again.

"This is it, you thief," I said.
"The last morsel you'll get from me."
A lemon . . . a LEMON . . . ANOTHER LEMON!!!
"Jackpot!" said the man from the IRS.

Rhonda Byers

Grocery Store
Whore
wants more
than she's had
there's never
enough to
satisfy her.
Men always
there
looking,
lusting,
and dreaming
She stares
cold,
knowing
her dreams are
dead,
and takes
a bottle of
scotch from
the shelf.

Ellen Dollar



Illustration by Bob Tooke

Retrospect

Humble Pride And Sorrowful Joy
 Searching For Another Ploy
 Masks Within And Masks Without
 Stifling A Silent Shout

Painful Pleasure
 Working for Leisure
 How Do We Measure
 The Poor Man's Treasure

Breaking The Bonds That Bind The Brain
 I'm Winning
 Escaping The Chains That Keep Me Sane
 I've Won

Logic Is Dead Inside My Head
 And The Smell That Arises, Surprises
 There Is The Sweet Smell Of Rot
 sure it's dark in here
 and yeah, things do look a little bit queer
 but forget that, and the smell of vomit and beer
 there is really nothing to fear
 (that i can see)

I'm Flying High Down The Road Of Paper And Rope
 and the sights i see are great
 but i've seen them all before
 i'll go down another road, through another gate
 another trip, through another door

Dropped The Vinegar On The Floor
 Then I Started To Soar

"let me tell you something
 it's hard to explain
 let me tell you a bit about what death is like
 it's sort of like this
 oh! wait wait! i need to tell you this first
 you may not understand why i'm telling you about death
 oh yeah! and one more thing, it may be strange
 to you that i'm telling you why i'm telling
 you about death

but please understand that the reason i'm
 telling you why i'm telling you why i'm telling
 you . . .
 never mind. let's go play video games
 and why is the ground moving?
 let me tell you a bit about . . ."

Maybe I'd Better Stop Traveling
 But I've Got A Wandering Soul
 Why Should I Stay Around Me
 How About If I Let The Bell Toll
 Then I'll Never Need To Reach My Goal

I Can't Get Away From Myself
 And I'm The Last Person I'd Like To Be With
 I Can Only Think Of One Way To Escape

The Answer Is . . . "by the way, did you know that
 if you wrap a needle in thread
 all the way up to the tip and
 make a cut on your wrist
 (varying the size depending on
 amount of blood you want
 to draw) and dip the tip of
 the needle into the cut, you
 can draw with it.
 it looks pretty professional."

Then I Always Was A Coward
 So I'll Wait A Little While
 But My Aversion To That Person (me)
 Continues To Pile

I Still Can't Get To The Core Of The
 Thing, Though I Tried
 I Never Could Find The Truth Because
 Somebody Lied
 to me.
 i did.
 the second most powerful being in the universe
 DID TOO.

Then It Was Over
 From Out Of Everywhere Came A Rescuer
 I Looked All About Me

Because Now I Could See
 A Large Gentle Hand
 Held Out The Light Of The Sun
 And The Voice Of A Lion, As Kind As A Lamb
 Said, "I AM"

"Come To Me"
 "But Sir" I Whispered Feeling My Bonds Fall Free
 "I've Failed You So Bad." "I Know." He Said. "Come To Me"
 "But The Things I Did," I Insisted
 "They Can't Be Undone." I Persisted
 "I Know But The Price Has Been Paid, COME TO ME."

I OBEYED
 NOW I'M FREE.

Warren Tape

Star Of The East IX

Midnight Drives

Dark paved roads
my heart and you
watch tadpole raindrops
hopping from blacktop
at stoplights
we laugh
you write
in unfogging fingertips
thick swirls
on windshields
the negatives of letters
like icing
atop a birthday cake
I am rainsoaked wet
and in love
with your name
perhaps even you
we smile
but another driving storm
through frog-spotted eve

Leslie Anne Gregory



*Illustration by
Leslie Anne Gregory*

When your dancing self comes in the room,
a sandalwood scented breeze follows,
and winds its way around,
behind the chair, under the table,
and perches on the piano.
I breathe it down,
smooth it on my skin,
trying to hold you.

When your laughing self comes in the room,
wild horses are freed.
They center, gallop, and frolic
through my mind.
And the echoes linger
long after the calm.

But, when your singing self comes in the room,
the music dances through the grass
and laughs with the wind.
For your song is in my spirit
and mine is in your soul.
We are the same melody . . .
with different words.

Kathleen Smith

Love

Sometimes love slips away,
Like the stars in the night.
Sometimes love comes to you,
Like the early morning light.

Maybe it's like the leaves on a tree,
It only lasts for awhile.
Or even like a summer breeze,
So refreshing — it makes you smile.

It may even take you by surprise,
Just like the snow in a way.
It can even make you wise,
But just what can you say?

Sometimes love dies,
Or just slips away.
Sometimes it comes to you,
And sometimes it stays.

Sandy Haymon

The Excursion

Because it was Saturday, my brother, Bubba, and I had once more rounded ourselves up, climbed into my Daddy's old pick-up truck, which he had given to Bubba as an eighteenth birthday present three years before, and which Bubba had spruced up with a musk-scented air freshener and a reflect-o film back window panel, and rode into town to go to the Wal Marts. But this particular Saturday was different than the usual Saturday-time-to-go-to-town-because-it's-Saturday-day for mainly two reasons, at least for two reasons at first.

The first reason was basic enough. It was the first Saturday of the month, a traditional time of migration for me and Bubba. We'd been making this trip ever since Bubba was old enough to drive, actually it was a little before Bubba got his license. But Daddy hated those trips into town, especially those that happen to fall on "First Saturdays" as Mama called them. Those trips always meant that we had a list of about fourteen-thousand things that usually included soap powder, pine oil, and Circus Peanuts, Daddy's favorite candy. And Daddy was more than happy to turn this task over to me and Bubba. First Saturdays always meant too many people in too small a place for Daddy, and high adventure for me. I loved it.

Bubba didn't mind too much him-

By Leslie Anne Gregory

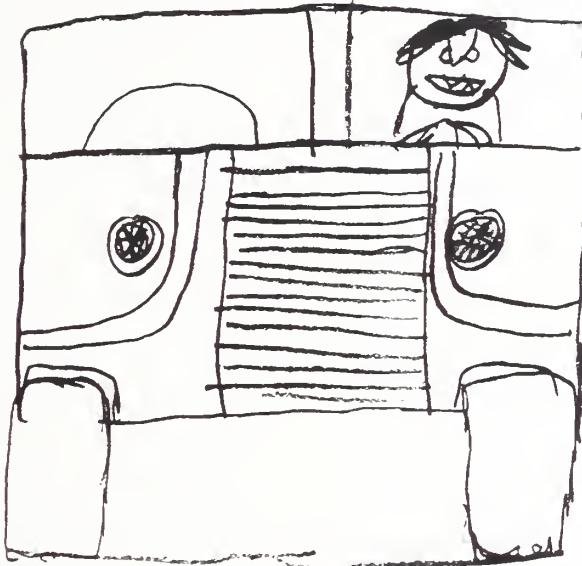


Illustration by Jeff Trajo, age 9

self, but didn't take the pleasure in it that I did. He was just too much "man" for that, for anything but ducks . . . or deer.

The second reason this Saturday was special was also the reason that Bubba and I were carrying around an extra two-hundred-and-fifty dollars in cash, plus First Saturday's traditional brown-enveloped two-hundred. The evening before, Mama and I had sat down and written out a list of things I would need to go off to school with. This was the Saturday of my wildest dreams. Soon I would be leaving the woods and heading to town, heading to the University. And I couldn't wait. Mama and Daddy probably could, but I couldn't. Bubba, as far as I could tell, was non-committal, except that once in a while he would say something along the lines of, "Sarah Ann don't go off to get too damn smart, and come home six months pregnant . . ." Needless to say, Bubba had his moments. But all in all, my family was pretty much supportive of my leaving for college. I was going to be my family's first graduate. Mama and Daddy were proud as hell, and Bubba was generally just pleased I wasn't pregnant already. So was I.

So we were heading to the Wal Marts: Bubba with the money-stuffed envelope in the pocket of his grey and red flannel hunting shirt, the pocket flap buttoned

tightly down, reasoning that it would be “safe as all hell” tucked away on his “bad ass body” (Bubba always did hold himself in high esteem) and me staring out the truck windows, smelling the adventure of this First Saturday, and reading license plates from exotic places that filled the highway as we came barrelling towards civilization.

“New York! Did you see that one Bubba? New York . . . I wonder if I’ll ever go to New York . . .”

“Probably not if Daddy has anything to do with it . . . He’d die. I can hear him now . . . ‘Too many goddam people doin’ to many goddam things for any daughter of *mine* . . .’ ” Bubba was laughing his whiney, through-the-nose laugh, and trying to pop the gear into fourth.

“Do you really think that big cities are such horrible places?”

“Nah, just not for me . . . or for you. There’s a sure-fire way to get pregnant for you.”

“Why did you have to bring that up? Why do you always have to bring that up? Don’t you think that I have any sense? Don’t you think that I have one inkling of sense . . . What makes you so damn sure that the minute I leave home I’m going to be that irresponsible. I’m already seventeen and I’m not knocked up yet . . . Am I?”

“Don’t talk that way, dammit . . . ain’t no way for a girl to be talking to her brother, especially her *older* brother . . .” Bubba was serious and speaking in our Daddy’s tone. Then he looked over at me and patted my knee. “I’m just worried that when you get out there, baby sister, which I know you’ll do, you’ll finally see something that you like, and all your ‘responsibility’ will just go to the wind . . . I figure the only reason you don’t have a boyfriend right now at home, besides the fact that you scare them all off with big words, is that you’re just too damn picky to choose what you want from those boys, our boys . . . but you’re going to find something out there,” he motioned to the up-coming city with his eyebrows, “and that will be the very end of your responsibility, Missy, and I just don’t want to see you get hurt, that’s all . . .”

“Thanks, I guess . . .”

We were coming across the old highway’s last stretch of hills and were just mounting the “Killer Hill” as the always original home boys called it since about fifteen of them, including my brother’s best friend, Edgar Raymond, had been killed in a big accident there. It was one of those drunk driving stories, like you hear over and over in Driver’s Ed class. All of them were drunk and playing chicken. The car in the rear, Edgar Raymond’s, was passing the other boys as they mounted that hill, you can’t see what’s coming from the other side, it’s too steep. At any rate, as you can guess, since all stupid drunk driving stories end this way, they were all killed by a truck, an eighteen wheeler that was coming over the other side. My brother hated that hill ever since. So just as we are crossing it, a small car pulled up behind us and started to pull out beside us.

“Look at that, Sarah Ann, there’s a stupid outside sonofabitch for you. Gonna get us all killed, asshole . . .” Bubba was yelling out his window at the driver of the little sporty car, I was staring at the license: California. I hoped the driver didn’t see me in the truck, riding into town with a screaming idiot, redneck, goat-roper, and hoping at the same time to get a glimpse at the skillful driver, to see if he looked like us, or if I could really tell from the set of his eyes or nose if he was from somewhere else.

“California . . .” I whispered, sinking under the dashboard. Bubba was still yelling, despite the fact that both our vehicles had top the hill with no problem. We were all whole, and on the other side. The small blue car pulled forward, and ahead too fast for me to see anything but its plates one more time . . . “California . . .” I giggled with delight.

“Better not catch you with an asshole sonofabitch from that place, you hear me . . .”

“Don’t be so melodramatic, Bubba. Jesus H. Christ . . .”

“We could have died . . .”

“Oh Bubba, calm down, alright, we made it over Killer Hill once again . . . okay, Jesus . . .”

Bubba was breathing hard, so hard he couldn’t speak. I could see his chest rise and fall really hard.

“Are you okay, Bubba?”

"Yeah . . ." he rubbed his eyes, ". . . yeah . . . sonsofabitches . . . goddam drunks . . . yeah, I ain't dead, you ain't p.g. . . . we're doing just fine, right?"

"Right . . . and headed to the Wal Marts . . ." I pointed to the turn off which Bubba always flew past unless I pointed it out to remind him.

"We finally made it to the store and then had the usual First Saturday struggle for a parking place. Personally I think that that should be one of the new events included in the next Olympics . . . right up there with the decathlon. If the parking places aren't already taken, then they're full of broken glass from the high schoolers busting beer bottles the night before. We lucked up and found a spot that was close but wasn't a handicapped one, which I wouldn't let Bubba park in, and which usually bitched him out. But this time he didn't yell at me about "damn cripples," I think he was pretty upset about the Killer Hill incident to care about "crips."

Once inside, Bubba took half the list, and I took the other half plus the list of things that Mama and I had written out the night before. I was wheeling along, with the traditional First Saturday items, and what was growing to look like a huge college-girl dowry in my basket: sheets, blankets, hairspray, toilet paper in the ten roll pack, Kleenex (four boxes — Mama was anticipating at least two colds for me), notebooks, and a broom, when I decide that I wanted to look at the albums. I did have ten dollars of my own to spend, and I figured that I owed myself a little something for surviving this long, and as a bit of a graduation present to myself.

Just as I walked the buggy onto the record aisle, I heard laughter. It was deep and different, it seemed almost foreign. But I liked it, and knew I had to find its source. It was such a new laugh, so odd, like I imagined baby whales going through puberty must sound like. Just the sound of it made me smile, and forgot that I was standing in the Wal Marts. It was the kind of laugh I want . . . It was different from those of the hill people I knew all too well already.

I spun my basket around to the film department and found him. The blood boy in a tweedy hat

standing at the counter, laughing so hard that if he'd been a turkey in a rain storm, he'd surely have drown from the position of his head, tilted way back. He and his friend were talking to the sales girl behind the film counter. It was obvious his friend was one of our home boys, I think that the Skoal ring on his back jeans pocket was the give-away, not to mention the fact that he was leching all over the poor little sales-girl. Kind of the kind of flirtation I always imagined Bubba using on a girl — if he ever got his mind off of deer long enough. But the foreigner was quiet and polite, except for his laughter, which was beginning to sound more like how I'd always thought Jesus would laugh, instead of a baby whale. He didn't want to paw all over the poor girl; he really didn't know her and seemed to respect that pretty much. And I respected that.

He stopped laughing long enough for me to see that his eyes were wide and green, not like the little jay bird beads the home boys hid behind squinty slits. He turned my direction and smiled; he was still laughing. I tried to smile back, and I suppose I really did get one out of the inside and onto the outside, or at least he knew I was staring at him, because he said, "Hi . . ." and winked one of those marvelous greens. I knew it was love. Or at least the kind of lust I'd only thought I'd felt before. Now it was staring me right back in the face. It was too incredible. I couldn't help but think of all those tacky romance novels my Aunt Iola kept in a pile of dust beside her cast iron bed. Immediately a new book title flashed into my head, *Lust In The Wal Marts*. I just knew that somewhere a little man, like Alan Funt, was filming all this, and I felt like an absolute idiot. But at the same time, I didn't care.

"Can you tell me which 35mm film is better?" I bravely asked him and held up two kinds of film. I didn't even own a 35mm camera but figured that he probably did, or at least knew a little something about them.

His friend started talking about F-stops and all kinds of crap I didn't care about, and I saw that I would have to take another approach. "What do you think?" I made sure I asked him directly.

Then he spoke and I thought I would die, then and there. He was walking toward me as he answered. His speech wasn't slurred or twangy like the home boys, or mine. I knew it was too perfect. "I don't know, I suppose Fugi. My camera, if you can call it a camera, is a 110. My working knowledge of cameras can be summed up by saying, 'press this button on top, hand the camera to your mother, let her wind it, and press the big button again.'"

"You and me both . . . I'm supposed to be buying this for a friend." I threw the roll of film into the basket, figuring I could deposit it when he wasn't around, like walk through somewhere he wouldn't be going and drop it on a shelf. I thought that the sanitary napkin row would be great. I smiled as I thought about it.

"I guess we all wind up in this God forsaken place thanks to our friends . . ." he pointed to the home boy who had turned back to his sales-girl. He seemed determined to conquer her, I hoped she didn't give in. He looked like a real slime.

"Yeah, our friends or our family . . . Nothing like First Saturday crowds . . . lots of screaming kids . . ."

"First Saturdays? What's that?"

"You know the first Saturday of the month. It's right after payday, and every one from the hills comes to town to stock up on everything for a month. That's why I'm here."

"Oh, I'm here with Arval, that's my buddy over there . . . My name's Steve. Do you go to the University?"

"Well, almost . . . I mean, yes, as of the new semester . . . My name's Sarah Ann. Glad to meet you. I suppose you do . . ."

"Do what?"

"Go to the University."

"Oh, yeah, I do . . . my major's Art. Yours?"

"Speeeeech tharahpee . . ." I joked in my best Mississippi accent, I got a shocked look from him. I thought it would be good for a laugh, plus maybe . . . just maybe it would make my hill nasal less noticeable. I was right, at least about the laugh, nothing can make me seem less nasal. "No really, my major is . . . will be officially soon, Biology."

"Wow, brains . . ."

"Not really, just enough interest to make me dumb enough to want to study a lot . . ."

"I guess so . . ."

"So . . . What . . ." just about then I heard a box of shells slam into the basket.

"Sarah Ann, why don't you stop talking and help me with this crap?" Bubba was standing there with arms full as they could be: shells, new pine air freshener for the truck, new welding cap, soap powder in the economy box, one gallon of pine oil, and sixteen bags of circus peanuts. I wanted to die.

"Oh, sure, Bubba, sorry. Steve this is my brother, Bubba . . . I mean Harold."

"Hi, nice to meet you . . ." Steve was extending his hand for a shake. Bubba, of course, was not responding.

"Yeah, right . . . Come on Sarah Ann . . . we got to get a move on . . ."

"Right Bubba," I kind of smiled regretfully at Steve, "Bye, see you around . . . thanks for the help." Bubba was wheeling the basket towards the check out counters. I turned to follow him after taking one last look.

"Bye Sar . . ." He touched my arm, "I don't suppose you'll be taking any art courses?"

"I just might . . ." I answered looking in his eyes.

"See you at registration then . . ."

"uh-huh," I shook my head 'yes.' And then I ran to catch up with Bubba who had found a fantastic spot at register 3 behind an old woman who was paying cash for two pairs of socks and a bag of pecans.

We checked out, or actually I checked us out while Bubba played 'Gopher Smash' in the lobby, which was full of crying hot babies and older folks with walkers and kids who were fighting Bubba for his championship title as King of the Gophers. When the check-out woman got to the film, which I had forgotten I had was in there, I started to tell her that I didn't want it, but instead I kept it. Who knows maybe I'll take a photography course in the fall, maybe I'll talk Steve into taking it, too. I wonder if they have any courses like, "Photography for the Owners of 100s?"

When I got through, I rounded up Bubba, some little "no-neck" nine-year-old boy had just taken away the title Bubba had won three months ago. I assured him there would be other First Saturdays, and that he'd win it back. He pouted all the way into the parking lot.

As we were loading up the truck, I heard a car honk and spun around in time to see an arm wave out the window of his little cute blue car, with California plates. I laughed. Bubba growled and I yelled, "Bye Steve!!!" and waved my arm plum near off. Still laughing, I looked at Bubba, who was

almost laughing himself, and certainly was shaking his head a lot, the same way he does when he misses a duck, but does something really funny, like shoots a tree limb down instead . . .

"See?" he said kind of snorting to hold back anything that might make me think he thought this was at all funny.

"I guess you're just always going to be right Bubba . . . I can't help it . . . I'm in lust . . . at the Wal-Marts!"

"Glory, Aunt Iola!!!"

Bubba yelled.
We laughed at least half the way home.



"Woman With Camera"
Black and white photograph by Warren Tape

Life Without Love

You say you'll never be hurt.
You'll never feel pain.
Your heart won't be dessert
For Mongrels feeding on wounded love.
You'll never be broken hearted.
Your love will never be discarded.
You can't lose something you won't
Give away. You can't give away
Something you've never had.
You should feel safe and smug.

Rhonda Byers



Illustration by Bob Tooke

What Happened?

What happened?

I trusted you; I loved you; I needed you.
Now I see I was just a toy like all your other friends,
an ego inflater, a gossip connection, a practical joke.
All along you neglected to see I had a heart.

I've changed.

I now play your flirting games
share the passionate letters from other girls
patronize other guys who envy me.

I'm you now
I stomp, I prance, I crush.
I lie.

What happened?

You were beautiful, wise.
You introduced me to Walt Whitman, T. S. Eliot.
You put a pen in my hand and said,
"write! Write like Faulkner, like Steinbeck
You're a part, be proud!"

and I wrote.

I wrote to tell the world I've found a friend
And you turned and said, "You're ugly!"
and I wrote.

I wrote to tell the world I'd found an enemy.
I wrote to tell of my humiliation, my hurt.
I wrote to tell of my loneliness.

What happened?

You plunged a corkscrew into my soul and twisted my emotions.
You made me laugh, cry, envy, hate, and love, all at once.
You broke my glass case and left me cut and bleeding in the rubble,
With only a pen to heal my wounds.

I've changed.

I've matured now
I know how to feel without your help
and I know how to write.
Thank you.

Archie Anderson

Sunday Blues

I wish I were
at the river
the fast flowing
water —
lay me down
and let it
wash me clean.
I wish I were
at the river
the glowing emerald
water —
lay me down
and let it
touch my soul.
Oh to be at
the river
that gentle, rough
water —
lay me down
beside it,
and let me
grow old.
I wish I were
the river
the fresh, rushing
water —
lay me down
and let it
be my soul.

Ellen Dollar

Firefight Night

Starshells float in a Napalm Night, this orange rankness
hangs suspended with phosphorous fumes, spent powder, and diesel.
Bartered daylight transform farmers, theirs hoes turn automatic.
We wait, and we know, Charlie will come.
We float between banks at idle, keeping rendezvous.
Up river we see flashes and watch
the red line tracers cross.

The radio screams about men's lives passing,
and where, and when, and how.
We are told "maintain position," (for Charlie will surely come).
The air and me trade sweat while gunner sits patiently
at his turret.

(

Suddenly the Red Lines draw on us, straight as the farmer's row.
Our lines fly out to criss cross theirs,
repetition and speed mean all.

The barrels glow and the casings go, we scream, and fire, and duck.

The line cuts gunner without slowing down, —
a counterclockwise thud.

Dismembered and squirming he wrestles with life, to
keep it from leaking out.

And Doc wants a tourniquet, then he says no, just a body bag.

But our guns still spit until theirs stop, then we idle down.

Quick to start and quick to stop, we wait for the sun to come around.

Warriors to farmers and weapons to hoes,

Charlie is fighting the ground.

Paul E. Niemoeller



"A Day On The Farm"
Black and white photograph by Warren Tape and Joel Pearce



"Solar Heat I"
Black and white photograph by Warren Tape and Joel Pearce

Saturday Afternoon: Approaching The Sixty-Sixth Year

When your hair is unpinned and floating
like fine white mist
on the lake in November,
I see the young woman.
She is still there . . .
no matter how disguised.
She ebbs and flows with the moon.
But when your hair is unpinned and flying,
you flirt . . . you tease . . . your eyes snap . . .
your heart rises up and fills your mouth
until laughter overflows and tumbles out
making its way through the room . . .
pausing to caress the air, to smooth the pages
of a book.
When your hair is unpinned and free,
there is no hiding the spirit.
The threads of life are entwined with
the ivory strands . . . and when unwound,
they release lover's knots of scarlet,
disparate patches of mourning locks,
glass beads of childhood games,
smoke and haze of days remembered.
But . . . it's merely comfortable,
you protest.
And so it is.
You should unpin your hair more often.

Third Caller

Kathleen Smith

Life
fragile
seems so short
clock ticks faster
we run after
memories
and dreams
Life.

Ellen Dollar

*... NEXT, A HANDLE POPS OUT OF MY BACK AND THEN I
WAKE UP IN A COLD SWEAT...*



Illustration by James Webb

Backstage

The cigarette had charred a disgraceful hole in the tabletop before she became aware of it. Still rather absent, she replaced it carefully in the ashtray and then blinked a couple of times in defiance of the smoke that lingered. Her dress was wrinkled and what paint wasn't gone, was smudged. It must be time to sleep; it was becoming daylight.

They had to be beautiful all day — no, actually, they were always beautiful, that's why they were here — and they all gathered in ritual behind the Japanese screens to repaint their faces. Most had learned by now those secrets of endurance, but none would enlighten latecomers. The competition was difficult enough. She hadn't realized that there was a competition.

She had been chosen for her movement. She had special poise, from a presence sensual because she seemed unaware, and the

By Lisa Davis



Illustration by Bob Tooke

walk she seemed born with was a command performance of much practice. Also the slight tilt of her head and calculated lowering of the eyes — and timing. These things she knew. And she only now knew they were valuable; they were keys that had to be secret because if anybody found out, they wanted them for keeps.

But one had to be asked first, and one has to be beautiful to be asked — and beautiful all the time to stay. She hadn't known it was so hard to stay, or that once you

became good at it, that's what would be expected and then one could never fall short. Not and stay.

So they were beautiful all day and did what was expected and never told each other what secrets they learned (someone might get an edge). And never told each other what hurt (my head, my goddamn feet in these goddamn heels, my heart) or

what they feared (this is *not* the right color, oh god it's torn, how old are you?,

I'm alone). And if they were good enough, they would endure, as long as they were beautiful.

Like she was today. And she was sure she was always beautiful. She had watched them watch her and she was sure. But then, she had always known the vitals: (silk/satin, physicalness, what a man wants, and \$\$) and how they worked. She kept her secrets organized in her deliberate mind and planned for the next party. She must even know how she would sit, with her dress up, just so, and her legs purposefully crossed — all planned, but appearing unaware, to seem defenseless (because that's what men want). She had learned well, utilizing the simple and the natural, like she saw the others do, so they would be

beautiful all the time and the intimidations would all be gone.

Until afterwards, when they all scuttled back to the dark when the sun came up. Then she was finally alone — and that frightened her. That's why she smoked so much. Because when she was alone, her deliberate mind undid itself and allowed her to be afraid (of her hair, crooked toe, runners, smeared lipstick).

Like she was now. She had let the fear take her so far this time, the table was burned. She slowly stretched herself and then realized she wouldn't sleep again. She laughed the rehearsed tinkling laugh, and went to wash her stockings so she would be ready.

The Night Watch

The evening's hot,
 the whispering of mosquitoes,
 their bzzz, bzzz, bzzz,
 as they congregate
 this Sunday night
 trying to decide
 whom to attack
 with sharpened tongues
 and flattering sighs,
 fills the aisles
 and nave of night,
 as broken crystal
 of the stars
 flickers first
 a hand not-quite-steady
 at the switch.
 They're joined by
 slivered almond moon
 it lends bright splinters
 to the womb
 of night.
 From church to grave
 all with the striking
 of the seeking tongue
 the bzzz, bzzz, bzzz
 removing life
 and leaving in the flight
 only hot, white flame
 and no sight
 at all.
 I have seen the moon
 in all its forms
 the pumpkin moon
 of harvest orange,
 the silver moon
 that sits in velvet
 after storms,
 the moon as full
 and nearly gold —
 and bright — as
 sister sun that sits
 in new day's sky
 at nearest light
 to dawn,
 the western sliver
 with the star
 set in its crest
 that's said to tell
 of danger,
 and like all the rest
 it meant nothing.

Patricia Ann Quayhagen

On Ending A Movement With You, A Sake For Sake's Artist

How long could one expect to lead an Impressionistic Life
 not long I suppose
 not as long as I would have liked
 C'est la Vie, C'est la Guerre, C'est la Morte
 But that's the breaks kiddo
 I've packed your paints, and post cards of filmy ocean scenes
 They were not for me
 Not my memories
 just superimpositions you wanted
 I don't have much faith in transplantations of the sublime nature
 Theirs is the best spot in my attic though
 about as good as you'll do bud
 Mange merde et morte, monsieur
 Can't you understand?
 Reproductions won't be my food for thought anymore
 I want A real Renoir
 If that's all right with you.

Leslie Anne Gregory

NO-NO, I MEAN HE REALLY CROAKED.



Illustration by James Webb

Fantasies

The wind
 blew
 over you
 into you
 and through
 you
 and i
 wished i
 could
 be it.

Ellen Dollar



Illustration by Kathryn Crandell

Rafters

Rafters, Rafters
You can't stay as high as the rafters
We all have to come down
Sometime.
Rafters
With a noose
So many play the game
Of partying and drinking and drugs
Till it's not just a game anymore.
Maybe they've won too many times.
Maybe you too.
Rafters, Rafters
It haunts me in my dreams
The music and the false smiles,
The pick-ups and the easy lies.
It's like a play that people act in,
Then they're acting out their
Lives.
AND can't quit
Like they quit before.
They're caught up in the drama
And the tragedy,
They're caught up in the lies,
And it will never be over.
It's Rafters till you die.
Rafters has no
Ladder to let you down.
There's no curtain to draw.
Everyone's a player
And everyone has lines
That someone
(As a joke)
Wrote one day

When they were high on coke.
Cocaine.
That's Rafters, that's Rafters
No ending,
Just going on and on.
And in the morning
When you wake up
It's Rafters again that night.
I see you standing
In the light.
Your eyes are kind of flat.
But I know it's okay
Because it's Rafters,
You're all Rafters,
You're living out your play.
I can't act my part,
I don't have a part,
Because I know it's only Rafters
I know that it's not life.
I see the gallows
And the skull and cross bones
And I know what that means.
It's lies, it's knife wounds, it's
kicking-ass
And LSD
It's one more beer
Before we go
And walking home in the cold.
I've been there in the morning
To see the other side,
But I'm just an interlude.
Rafters is waiting with your life blood
mixed with blood and 'ludes,

And I'm left behind.
You told me, though,
Or tried to.
But I was young
And so naive
And I thought it was a game.
I tried to play, too.
But I can't
And you knew it
So you can cut out the interludes.
You can handle the
Rough stuff, right?
The real world and the Rafterludes.
The Rafters, the Rafters.
I kind of miss it,
Not giving a damn
How many people see
'Cause they're all messed up too
No one will remember
How much you did.
One week fades into another,
Day by Rafterday
Until it seems that Rafters
Is your life.
You drink it, you snort it, you eat it
up.
You shoot it, you love it, you live it
Everyday
Even when you're away
It's still your play
It's Rafters, it's Rafters

Kathryn Crandell



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